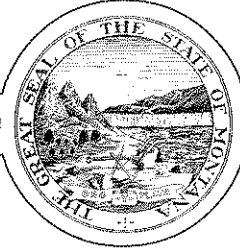


DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
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October 23, 2008

Senator Bob Hawks
703 West Koch Street
Bozeman, MT 59715-4477

Re: SB 51 – Suspension of Rulemaking

Dear Senator Hawks:

I write to notify you that the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation ("DNRC") has temporarily suspended the rulemaking process with respect to Senate Bill 51's wildland-urban interface ("WUI") rulemaking component.

The reason for the suspension is that it became clear during the process to date that it was necessary that DNRC and the Department of Labor and Industry ("DLI") coordinate more closely with respect to the WUI rules and the rules DLI will adopt regarding construction techniques, rules that will have, as you know, a direct tie-in with DNRC's wildland-urban interface rules. It is DNRC's understanding that DLI anticipates having its construction technique rules adopted by early May 2009.

In the meantime, DNRC personnel are continuing to meet with the same group of interested parties who have assisted DNRC in developing the wildland-urban interface guidelines. There was a meeting on September 29 in Helena and another will take place on November 17 in Helena. You are, of course, more than welcome to attend any of the meetings.

If you should have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "m. phares".

MARK PHARES
Special Assistant Attorney General
Montana Department of Natural
Resources and Conservation